

Remarks

Status of the Claims

With the entry of this Amendment, claims 1, 2, 4, 6, 7 and 9-13 will be pending in this patent application. In this Amendment, Applicant amends claims 1, 2, 6 and 9, adds claims 10-13, and cancels claims 3, 5 and 8.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant notes with appreciation that the Examiner recognized claims 5 and 8 as reciting allowable subject matter. In this Amendment, claims 5 and 8 have been canceled, and the subject matter of these claims has been incorporated into claims 1 and 2, respectively.

Objections to Claims

In the Final Rejection, the Examiner objected to claim 3 as being of improper dependent form. This objection is obviated by the cancellation of claim 3 in this Amendment.

Rejection Under 35 USC § 112, Second Paragraph

The Examiner rejected claims 2, 3 and 6-9 as being indefinite. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection insofar as it might be deemed applicable to claims 2, 6, 7 and 9, as now presented.

In this Amendment, claims 5 and 8 have been canceled, and the subject matter recited in these claims has been added to claims 1 and 2, respectively. In the second paragraph of claim 2, "region" has been changed to --range--, for agreement with the antecedent recited in the first paragraph. Claims 6 and 9 have been amended to clearly recite properties of the prepregs that are disposed from the tip end to the butt end of the shaft; support for the features recited in these claims can be found in the showing of prepregs 11, 12, 13, 18

and 19 in drawing Fig. 2. The subject matter deleted from claims 6 and 9 has been introduced in new claims 10 and 11, which depend from claims 6 and 9, respectively. New claims 12 and 13, depending from claims 1 and 2, respectively, recite the area of the prepregs making up the straight and angular layers as decreasing in the direction from the tip side to the butt side. Support for the features recited in claims 10-13 can be found in the showing of prepregs 15, 16 and 17 in drawing Fig. 2.

Rejection Under 35 USC § 103(a)

The Examiner rejected claims 1-4 and 7 as being unpatentable over US 6273830 B1 (Takemura et al.) in view of US 6110056 (Yamamoto). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection insofar as it might be deemed applicable to claims 1, 2, 4 and 7 as now presented.

Without acquiescing in the rejection, Applicant has canceled claims 5 and 8 and has carefully rewritten claims 1 and 2 to incorporate the subject matter that had been recited in claims 5 and 8, respectively. Claims 5 and 8 have been recognized by the Examiner as reciting allowable subject matter. Accordingly, Applicant submits that the amendments to the claims presented herein obviate the rejection of claims 1, 2, 4 and 7 and place these claims in condition for allowance.

Entry of Amendment

Applicant respectfully requests that this Amendment be entered under the provisions of 37 CFR § 1.116(b)(1) and/or (2).

By this Amendment, Applicant has canceled claims and has incorporated subject matter recognized as allowable by the Examiner into the independent claims. The dependent claims that would be pending upon entry of this Amendment properly depend, either directly or indirectly, from the independent claims.

Application No. 10/715,474
Amendment dated July 5, 2005
Response to Final Rejection of March 2, 2005

Applicant submits that this Amendment places this patent application in condition for allowance and, on this ground, requests that this Amendment be entered.

If the Examiner finds that this Amendment does not place this patent application in condition for allowance, Applicant respectfully requests that the Amendment be entered for purposes of appeal, on the ground that it presents the rejected claims in better form for consideration on appeal.

Conclusion

As presented in this Amendment, independent claims 1 and 2, the only independent claims pending in this application, incorporate subject matter recognized as allowable by the Examiner. Applicant trusts that the Examiner will find these claims, as well as the claims depending there from, to be allowable. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the objections and rejections stated in the Final Rejection be withdrawn and that claims 1, 2, 4, 6, 7 and 9-13 be allowed.

Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.17 and 1.136(a), Applicant(s) respectfully petition(s) for a one (1) month extension of time for filing a reply to the last Office Action. The required fee of \$120.00 is attached hereto.

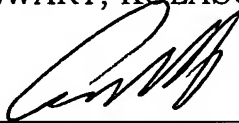
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If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17, in particular, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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By



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